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**MEDIA LITERACY COMPETENCE AND USE OF NEW MEDIA FOR
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2016**

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Abstrak

Terdapat kebimbangan mengenai risiko pendedahan belia dalam persekitaran media baharu di Nigeria. Di samping itu, wujud pemerhatian bahawa belia tidak menggunakan media baharu untuk terlibat dengan isu-isu penting dalam masyarakat. Hal tersebut menimbulkan persoalan berhubung kecekapan literasi media dan kewajipan penglibatan sivik dalam kalangan belia. Sehubungan itu, kajian ini menyelidiki kecekapan literasi media di kalangan belia dan penggunaan media baharu untuk empat jenis penglibatan sivik dalam talian. Teori Kognitif Literasi Media dan Model Keterlibatan Kewarganegaraan menjadi teori asas kajian ini. Kajian ini adalah suatu kajian keratan rentas dengan 503 belia di kawasan luar bandar dan bandar di Kwara State, Nigeria dipilih sebagai responden melalui persampelan sistematik. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan Permodelan Persamaan Berstruktur Kuasa Dua Terkecil Separa. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan pemahaman kritikal dalam kalangan belia berada di tahap rendah yang turut menjelaskan sebab golongan belia terdedah kepada risiko persekitaran dalam talian. Kajian mendapati wujud penggunaan media baharu yang signifikan untuk penglibatan sivik berdasarkan jenis media. Hasil analisis juga tidak mendedahkan perbezaan yang signifikan dalam penggunaan media baharu untuk penglibatan sivik berdasarkan sosio ekonomi dan lokasi geografikal. Walau bagaimanapun, keputusan analisis menunjukkan bahawa pendidikan media adalah signifikan sebagai penyederhana hubungan antara kebolehan komunikasi dan penggunaan media baharu untuk penglibatan sivik. Secara khusus, dapatan kajian ini menyumbang kepada pembentukan model hubungan antara dimensi kecekapan literasi media dan penggunaan media baharu untuk penglibatan sivik dan peranan pendidikan media sebagai penyederhana hubungan. Ini mengesahkan andaian teori berhubung perkaitan literasi media untuk membina warganegaraan dalam kalangan belia yang aktif. Dapatan tersebut bakal menjadi panduan kepada dasar kerajaan tentang peranan kecekapan literasi media dalam penggunaan media baharu untuk memaksimumkan peluang dan mengurangkan risiko dalam persekitaran media baharu di Nigeria.

Kata kunci: literasi media, penglibatan sivik, media baharu, belia Nigeria

Abstract

There have been concerns about youths' exposure to risks in the new media environment in Nigeria. Alongside this is also the observation that the youths are not using the new media to engage important issues in society. These raise issues about the media literacy competence of the youths and their civic engagement obligations. Therefore this study investigated media literacy competence among youths and the use of new media in four types of online civic engagement. Cognitive theory of Media Literacy and the Model of Engaged Citizenship served as underpinning theories for the study. The study is a cross sectional survey with systematic sampling of 503 youths in rural and urban areas of Kwara State, Nigeria. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The results indicated low level of critical understanding among youths which explains why the youths are exposed to risk in online environment. The study found significant use of new media for civic engagement across new media types. The results did not reveal significant differences in the use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of socio economic and geographical location of the youths. However, it showed that media education significantly moderated the relationship between communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement. These findings specifically contribute to modeling the relationship between dimensions of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement and the moderating role of media education in the relationship. It confirmed the theoretical notion of the relevance of media literacy to building active and engaged citizenship among the youths. This outcome will guide government policy on the role of media literacy competence in the use of new media such that user maximizes opportunities and minimizes risks in Nigeria's new media environment.

Keywords: media literacy, civic engagement, new media, Nigerian youths

Acknowledgement

Alhamdulillah robil alamina. I give thanks to Allah for His mercy and guidance that saw me through this programme. Throughout my educational and life pursuits, He has provided me faith that made me to have abiding confidence in Him. Wa lilahi li amdu.

My appreciation goes to my supervisors Dr Mohd Khairie Ahmad for his guidance, accommodation, tolerance and professionalism in our relationships. Many thanks also go to my second supervisor, Prof. Dr. Che Su Mustaffa for her motivation and soft but strict academic guidance. I am grateful.

I remain eternally grateful to Allah who provided me the timely support of many people. From the home front, my mother and wife held forth firmly and kept me well focused, my siblings are huge source of motivations; my cousins especially Alhaji Ishaq Saka Onide and Serifat Oniye are ever supportive. I thank Dr Nasir Abdulah, of ABU Zaria and a colleague at UUM for the guidance on data analysis and also Taofik Abdulkareem for his brotherly support. May Allah have mercy on my uncle Abdulrahman Kehinde who died, in active struggle against the vicissitudes of life, eight months into my programme.

I appreciate Dr. Hajjah Wan Zarina Bt Wan Mahmud BCK, Head, UUM Medical Centre. Her courage, sensitivity and professionalism provided a critical intervention at a point when despondence interjected itself on my progress journey.

My wife, Hajia Fatima Abolore, lived up to the pet name I gave her (My Sekina—my source of tranquillity) as she did well in nurturing Tahir and Mordiyah and also gave me Rodhiyah and Salamat during the course of this sojourn in Malaysia.

Both in Nigeria and in Malaysia, I acknowledged the camaraderie of friends, A.B Lawal, Sheik Suleman Alanamu, Drs, Azeez Lukuman, A.O.Issa Ishaq Salimonu, Rasaq Adisa, A.S Mohammed, Raji Jimoh, O.A.Afolabi and Bazeet Badru especially at a particular critical moment of my stay in UUM. The support and friendship of colleagues at both dept of Mass Communication, Unilorin and the SMMTC Post Graduate Workstation are duly acknowledged. May Allah make us a continuing sources of inspiration to our people and a big pride of our faith, our nation and humanity in general.

Oba Abdulkadir La'aro
February, 2016.

Table of Contents

Permission to Use	i
Abstrak	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	xi
List of Figures	xiii
List of Appendices	xiv
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 An Overview	1
1.2 Background to the study	1
1.3 Statement of Problem	7
1.4 Research Questions	13
1.5 Research Objectives	14
1.6 Rationale for the Study	16
1.7 Significance of the Study	16
1.8 Scope and Delimitation of Study	18
1.9 Conceptual Definition	18
1.9.1 Civic Engagement	18
1.9.2 Media Literacy	19
1.9.3 Media Literacy Competence	20
1.9.4 New Media	20
1.9.5 Use of New Media	21
1.9.6 Youths	21
1.9.7 Media Education	22
1.9.8 Socio-economic Status	22
1.9.9 Geographical Location	23
1.9.10 Chapter Summary	23
CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW	25
2.1 Introduction	25

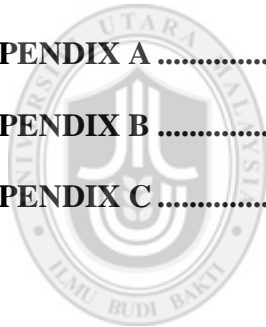
2.2 Definition and perspectives on study concepts	25
2.2.1 Civic Engagement	25
2.2.2 Online Civic Engagement.....	27
2.2.3 Civic Engagement and Citizenship.....	28
2.2.3.1 The Personally Responsible Citizen	29
2.2.3.2 The Participatory Citizen.....	29
2.2.3.3 The Justice-Oriented Citizen	30
2.3 Media Literacy: Meaning and Perspectives	31
2.4 Media Literacy Concept and Approaches	33
2.4.1 Concepts	33
2.4.2 Approaches.....	38
2.4.3 Protectionist/Inoculation Approach	39
2.4.4 Preparatory/empowerment/participatory perspectives	42
2.5 Youth and the New Digital Media Environment.....	45
2.6 Perspectives on Media Literacy Competences	50
2.6.1 Media Literacy Competences.....	50
2.6.2 Dimensions of media literacy competences	53
2.6.3 Access/ Usage Skills	54
2.6.4 Relationship between Access, Usage Skills, Socio Economic Status and Geographical Location	56
2.6.5 Critical Understanding	59
2.6.6 Communication Abilities.....	65
2.7 Moderating Influence of Media Education.....	72
2.8 Relationship of Socio- Economic Status, Media Use and Civic Engagement	74
2.9 Perspectives on Media Use and Civic Engagement	79
2.10 Gaps in Literature.....	82
2.11 Underpinning Theory	86
2.11.1 Cognitive Theory of Media Literacy.....	86
2.11.2 Theory on relationship between media literacy and use of new media for civic engagement.....	89
2.12 Research Model for the Study	93
2.13 Chapter Summary	96

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	97
3.1 Introduction	97
3.2 Research Philosophy	97
3.3 Research Design	100
3.4 Operational Definition	101
3.4.1 Use of new media Civic Engagement	101
3.4.2 Access and Usage Skills	101
3.4.3 Critical understanding	102
3.4.4 Communication abilities	102
3.4.5 Media Education	102
3.4.6 Socio-economic Status	103
3.4.7 Geographical Location	103
3.5 Sampling for the Study	103
3.5.1 Population	103
3.5.2 Research Place	104
3.5.3 Sampling Frame	106
3.5.4 Sampling Procedure	108
3.5.5 Sample Size Determination	110
3.6 Research Instrument	114
3.6.1 Measurement and Description of the Instrument	117
3.6.2 Level of measurement and response Scales	118
3.7 Test of Validity and Reliability	119
3.7.1 Validity Test	119
3.7.2 Reliability Test	120
3.7.3 Pilot Study	120
3.7.4 The Second Pilot Study	122
3.7.5 The Final Questionnaire Measurement Items	124
3.7.6 Data Presentation and Analysis	125
3.8 Unit of Analysis	127
3.9 Post Hoc Power Analysis	127
3.10 Chapter Summary	128

CHAPTER FOUR DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	130
4.1 Introduction	130
4.2 Response Rate.....	130
4.3 Data Screening and Preliminary Analysis	132
4.3.1 Detection and Treatment of Missing Data	133
4.3.2 Detection and Treatment of Outliers	133
4.3.3 Normality Tests	135
4.3.4 Multicollinearity	137
4.3.5 Assumptions of Homoscedasticity	139
4.3.6 Common Method Variance	139
4.4 Profile of Respondents.....	141
4.5 Assessment of Media Literacy Competences	143
4.5.1 Access and Usage of Media Gadgets on the Internet	143
4.5.2 Assessing the Critical Understanding Practices among Respondents as Measured by Attitude to Information, Awareness of Media Laws and Ethics and Self Rated Protection Skills.....	145
4.5.2.1 Attitude to Information.....	145
4.5.2.2 Awareness of Media Law and Ethics	147
4.5.2.3 Awareness of Content and Skills of Protection.....	148
4.5.3 Assessing Communication Abilities based on Use of the Internet for Self Created Content, Civic Activities and for Economic Purposes.	149
4.5.4 Assessing the Use of New Media Applications on the Internet for Civic Engagement.....	151
4.5.4.1 Use of Face book for Civic Engagement.....	152
4.5.4.2 Use of You Tube for Civic Engagement	153
4.5.4.3 Use of Weblog for Civic Engagement.....	154
4.5.4.4 Use of Twitter for Civic Engagement	156
4.5.5 Assessing the Exposure of Respondents to Media Education	157
4.6 Summary of profile and Assessment	159
4.7 Multi group Differences based on Gender, Education, Income, Geographical Location	160
4.7.1 Multi group Differences based on Education	161
4.7.2 Multi group Differences based on Gender.....	162

4.7.3 Multi group Differences based on Income Background	163
4.7.4 Multi group Differences based on Geographical Location	164
4.7.5 Summary of Group Differences	165
4.8 Inferential Statistics and Measurement of Relationships	166
4.8.1 Assessment of Smart Partial Least Square, PLS-SEM Model Results	166
4.8.2 Assessment of Measurement Model	167
4.8.2.1 Reliability	167
4.8.2.2 Internal Consistency Reliability	168
4.8.2.3 Validity Test	170
4.8.2.4 Convergent Validity	170
4.8.2.5 Discriminant Validity	172
4.9 Validation of the Structural Model	177
4.9.1 Assessment of Significance of the Structural Model	177
4.9.2 Assessment of Variance Explained in the Endogenous Latent Variables (R ²)	179
4.9.3 Assessment of Effect Size	180
4.9.4 Assessment of Predictive Relevance	182
4.10 Testing Moderating Effect	183
4.10.1 Determining the Strength of the Moderating Effects	185
4.11 The Structural Model Graph	186
4.12 Chapter Summary	188
CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	190
5.1 Introduction	190
5.2 Overview of Objective	191
5.3 Discussion	193
5.3.1 Level of Media Literacy Skills among Respondents based on Access and Usage Skills, Critical Understanding and Communication Ability	194
5.4 Assessing the Use of New Media for Civic Engagement	195
5.5 Usage Differences based on Education, Income Sex and Geographical Location	198
5.6 Hypothesized Relationships	202
5.6.1 Media Literacy Competence based on Use of New Media for Civic Engagement	202

5.7 Moderating Effect of Media Education on the Relationship between Media Literacy Competence and Use of New Media for Civic Engagement	205
5.7.1 Moderating Role of Media Education	205
5.8 Theoretical Implications	207
5.9 Empirical Evidence on Media Literacy Competence Theory	208
5.10 Empirical Evidence on Moderating Role of Media Education	209
5.11 Contribution to Modeling of the Relationship between Media Literacy and Civic Engagement	210
5.12 Practical Implication	210
5.13 Methodological Implication	211
5.14 Limitations/Suggestions for future study	212
5.15 Conclusion	214
REFERENCES	216
APPENDIX A	233
APPENDIX B	244
APPENDIX C	251



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List of Tables

Table 2.1 Source and principal dimensions of media literacy	37
Table 2.2 Potter's Cognitive Media Literacy Skills	88
Table 3.1 Distribution of the population according to local government and gender	106
Table 3.2 Distribution of youth's population according to LGAs and gender in Kwara State	108
Table 3.3 Population Distribution According to Local Government Areas and Settlement	113
Table 3.4 Distribution of Questionnaire	114
Table 3.5 Description of the items and their sources	116
Table 3.6 Item statistics and reliability for the construct used for the pilot study	122
Table 3.7 Item statistics and reliability for the construct used for the pilot study	123
Table 3.8 The variables and their questionnaire items	124
Table 4.1 Response Rate of the Questionnaires	131
Table 4.2 Statistical Normality Test of Respondents Distribution: Skewness and Kurtosis	136
Table 4.3 Statistical Normality Test of Respondents Distribution: Kolmogorov-Sminov and Shapiro-Wilik	137
Table 4.4 Correlation of the variables	137
Table 4.5 Coefficients	139
Table 4.6 Distribution of respondents according to level of education, gender, age, income background and place of residence(n=503)	142
Table 4.7 Descriptive Analysis of Latent Constructs	142
Table 4.8 Assessing the access and usage divide among respondents' according to access to gadgets and media applications on the Internet(n=503)	144
Table 4.9 Distribution of respondents according to level of critical understanding practices as measured by attitude to information (n=503)	146
Table 4.10 Distribution of respondents according to level of critical understanding practices as measured by awareness of media laws and ethics	147
Table 4.11 Distribution of respondents according to level of critical understanding practices as measured by self rated protection skills	148
Table 4.12 Distribution of respondents according to communication activities on the Internet as measured by frequency of carrying out the following activates.	150
Table 4.13 Use of Facebook for Civic Engagement	153
Table 4.14 Use of You Tube for Civic Engagement	154

Table 4.15 Use of Weblog for Civic Engagement	155
Table 4.16 Use of Twitter for Civic Engagement	157
Table 4.17 Distribution of respondents according to their exposure to media education	158
Table 4.18 Differences of relationship on the basis of educational background of respondents	162
Table 4.19 Differences of relationship on the basis of gender of respondents	163
Table 4.20 Differences of relationship on the basis of income background of respondents	164
Table 4.21 Differences of relationship on the basis of geographical location of respondents	165
Table 4.22 Items loadings, average variance extracted, composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha	169
Table 4.23 Latent Variable Correlations and Square Roots of Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	171
Table 4.24 Items, standard loadings, average variance extracted	171
Table 4.25 Latent Variable Correlations and Square roots of Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	173
Table 4.26 Factor loadings	174
Table 4.27 Summary of the method, threshold and the sources that guided the reliability and validity process adopted for the study <u>Validity Criteria for Reflective Measures</u>	175
Table 4.28 Hypothesis Testing of the relationship between constructs	179
Table 4.29 Variance Explained by the Endogenous Latent Variables in the exogenous variable	180
Table 4.30 Effect size measurement	181
Table 4.31 Predictive relevance of the model (Q2)	183
Table 4.32 Moderating influence of media education on the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement	185
Table 4.33 Summary of Findings	188

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Research Model	95
Figure 3.1 Map of Nigeria showing Kwara State	106
Figure 3.2 Post Hoc output for sample size Analysis	129
Figure 4.1 Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual.....	136
Figure 4.2 Measurement Model for the study.....	176
Figure 4.3 Moderating Graph.....	186
Figure 4.4 Structural Model Assessments with Moderator.....	187



List of Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire	233
Appendix B: Histogram for all Variables	244
Appendix C: Descriptives statistics for all variables	251



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 An Overview

This research is focused on the relationship between media literacy competencies (access and usage skills, critical understanding and communication abilities) and use of new media for civic engagement among youths. This chapter introduces the background to the research and the problem statement. Following them are the research objectives and the research questions that guided the design of the study. The concluding parts of the chapter highlighted the rationale for the study; the significance of the study and definitions of the terms used in the study. The orientation of the study is to investigate the relevance of media literacy to use of new media in a way that avoid risks and help to cultivate active and inclusive participation of youths in socio political process.

1.2 Background to the study

Media literacy has become a necessity and hardly a luxury if the society must produce active citizenship in the twenty first century (Kahnee,Ullman & Middaugh, 2011). The advent of the new digital media environment has made it imperative for society across the world to reconsider the practice of citizenship and media relationship. This imperative is much more pronounced in the particular case of the youths. The youths not only need to be active and engaging but also act responsibly in the new media environment. The idea of active or engaging citizenship that is also responsible is encapsulated in the concept of civic engagement. In traditional term, civic engagement refer to the degree to which people become involved in their community, both actively and passively, including such activities as political participation, community

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